

FUNCTION LIMIT SAID POSSIBLE

Doctors Speculate as to
Senator's Future

By RALPH DIGHTON

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A grim possibility that Sen. Robert F. Kennedy might face an indefinite life of limited usefulness if he survives an assassin's bullet emerged Wednesday after first reports on the extent of brain damage.

Dr. John D. French, director of the Brain Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles, said in an interview that reports of injury to the central part of the brain raised grave doubts about Kennedy's recovery.

In New York, Dr. Lawrence Pool, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center neurosurgeon, said Dr. Henry Cuneo, one of the men who operated on Kennedy, had authorized him to give this version of the injury.

"There was evidently serious damage to the cerebellum, the part of the brain on the extreme back of the head, on the right side; also to part of the right cerebral hemisphere, and also to the mid-brain, which is the main cable connecting the brain itself with all the rest of the body.

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"This mid-brain deals with not only the function of motion in the arms and legs and sensation to the body but also with eye movements and even the life function itself, such as blood pressure, breathing, heart rate.

"So it's a very critical area, and this was injured, and this is why I fear—as Dr. Cuneo indicated—the outcome may be extremely tragic."

Dr. Pool said he was greatly fearful of the outcome, both in terms of Kennedy surviving and being in normal condition if he does survive.

Dr. French, also a neurosurgeon, said "if the central core, or brain stem, is damaged severely the outlook may be worse than if almost any other part of the brain were injured.

"Investigations at the insti-